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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINGSTON 001316

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR CA/FPP; CA/VO/F/P; CA/OCS/ACS/WHA; WHA/CAR;
DS/CR/VF
DHS FOR HQINT, HQOAI, CAO AND FDL
MEXICO ALSO FOR DHS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CPAS](#) [CVIS](#) [JM](#) [KFRD](#) [TIP](#)

SUBJECT: WESTERN HEMISPHERE TRAVEL DOCUMENT INITIATIVE
(WHTI)

REF: A. STATE 44089

[1](#)B. KINGSTON 867

CABLE IS SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED IN ITS ENTIRETY, PLEASE
PROTECT ACCORDINGLY.

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Jamaica is one of the countries in the Caribbean which exempts U.S. citizens traveling to the island for tourism from the requirement of a passport or visa. Ref (A) announced that effective December 31, 2005, DHS will require all U.S. citizens traveling to and from the Caribbean, including Jamaica, to have a passport or other acceptable travel document. The GOJ has informed Post that this requirement will impede visitor flows to Jamaica from the U.S. where more than half of U.S. tourists enter without passports. Nevertheless, Post strongly endorses the proposed WHTI schedule due to the high rate of document fraud that exists in Jamaica, including the use of fraudulent U.S. birth certificates and driver licenses, as well as photo-subbed U.S. passports. End Summary.

NEW IMMIGRATION TECHNOLOGY IN THE U.S. AND JAMAICA

[1](#)2. (SBU) Since the introduction of U.S. Visit in January 2004, and biometrics in Kingston in June 2004, Post has noticed an increase in false claims to U.S. citizenship cases. Investigative tips from multiple criminal intelligence sources suggested that vendors refrained from aggressive fraud efforts to alter or counterfeit U.S. visas and moved to selling U.S. birth certificates. The shift was due largely to the fingerprint verification requirement for visas on issuance at Post and again at the Ports of Entry.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Another reason vendors resorted to selling false U.S. birth certificates was due to a change in accountability methods used by Jamaican Immigration. In October 2004, Jamaica instituted an INL-funded computerized entry and exit system to reinforce immigration accountability. In the past, illegal workers and overstays would remain in the U.S., but would ship their passports to Jamaica for a fraudulent backdated stamp. However, new technology in Jamaica is designed to track entry and exit of travelers. Although there are still some problems with the GOJ's comprehensive and consistent use of the new system at both major airports, early reports indicate an increase of Jamaicans interdicted by airport officials for using false entry and exit stamps.

[1](#)4. (SBU) U.S. birth certificates used for travel to the U.S. continue to trouble fraud prevention efforts in Jamaica. The frequent misuse of U.S. birth certificates and I.D. cards used as travel documents has peaked as the preferred method of criminal/impostor travel. It is unclear and nearly impossible to account for the number of persons using birth certificates and bogus ID cards to gain entry to the U.S. This method of travel clearly creates a potential threat to U.S. national security. Persons using U.S. birth certificates are rarely challenged as to the validity of their claim to U.S. citizenship by either local airline or immigration employees when departing Jamaica for the U.S.

[1](#)5. (SBU) Birth certificates are one of the many "breeder" documents used to obtain entry to the U.S. from Caribbean countries. Once in the U.S., those same persons obtain other vital documents to legitimize their illegal stay, i.e., social security cards and driver's licenses. Increasingly, illegal document vendors choose to purchase or steal U.S. birth certificates or obtain copies of authentic certificates using fraudulent means. It is well worth the effort as the prices on the street bring lucrative profits. An authentic U.S. birth certificate not only provides the bearer with a new identity, but the false claim of U.S. citizenship bypasses the risk of being photographed and fingerprinted at Ports of Entry. Thus, it has become the preferred reentry method for Jamaica's legions of criminal deportees as well as for economic migrants. Given the multi-ethnic composition of Jamaican society, U.S. birth certificates -- as well as easily obtainable false Jamaican passports -- present a vulnerability from third country nationals seeking to enter

the U.S. or Canada posing as American citizens. We see increasing evidence of organized alien smuggling involving South Asian, Chinese and Cubans who transit Jamaica using false U.S. identification or passports of visa waiver countries.

CHILD MIGRATION/TRAFFICKING

16. (SBU) Apart from adult deportees, economic migrants and possibly terrorists, we are concerned about the prevalence of U.S. birth certificates to move illegally Jamaican children to the U.S. The practice is not uncommon, but it can be more difficult to detect through questioning than might be the case with an adult impostor. Jamaica is about to be designated a Tier 3 country for trafficking in persons, primarily based on evidence of minors involvement in the sex and pornography trade, and by the GOJ's lethargic response in addressing it. Although we believe that the vast majority of Jamaican children smuggled into the U.S. through the false identity of an American birth certificate are kids joining parents already living illegally in the U.S. or who are circumventing a long wait for a priority date for legal immigration, we cannot rule out some instances of child smuggling for more nefarious purposes. Jamaican Lee Boyd Malvo is a classic example.

STATISTICS

17. (SBU) ACS has approximately 5-8 possible fraudulent passport and CRBA cases still pending from 2004, whereby the applicant never returned with additional documentation requested by the ACS officer.

-- In FY-2004, there were 120 lost and 90 stolen passport cases reported to ACS. Airline and immigration officials at Kingston's international airport forwarded to Post approximately 20 suspected fraudulent documents seized by airline and immigration officials. Airline officials informed those travelers to appear at the Embassy's fraud section to reclaim their documents. Most never came.

18. (SBU) DHS Kingston intercepted approximately 100 travelers at Kingston's international airport in FY-2004 with questionable birth certificates. Only half were identified and relatively few are prosecuted by the GOJ.

19. (SBU) COMMENT: Post fully understands the concern of the GOJ for its potential loss of U.S. tourist revenue. However, with the increased use of fraudulent U.S. documents, Post concurs with the WHTI implementation date proposed for the use of passports for travel to Jamaica and the rest of the Caribbean. Though Jamaica is considered a low terrorism threat country, a terrorist with a good command of the English language could enter Jamaica on almost any type of passport and then use a U.S. birth certificate to assume the identity of a U.S. citizen. Lax document inspection procedures, compounded by corruption among immigration and airport employees, facilitates illegal migration as well as narcotics trafficking and weapons smuggling at both of Jamaica's international airports. The problem is more acute at Montego Bay's Sangster Airport, the facility through which most U.S. unpassported tourists travel and which, given its greater distance from Kingston, is more difficult for Embassy Kingston staff to monitor. Although several Mission elements are working with the GOJ to address airport (and seaport) security issues, from our perspective the implementation of WHTI as scheduled goes a long way towards rectifying one of our major homeland security concerns.

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